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## Leadership Team

### Finding Ourselves in a Shared Purpose

As I stepped into the role of “President of the Month” for September, I’ve been reflecting on what it means to belong to the Canadian Federation of University Women. Our mandate — to promote education, advocacy, and the advancement of women — can sound formal on paper, but its heart is deeply personal. It reminds us that we are not only members of an organization, but part of a living community bound by shared purpose.

When we come together — in meetings, study groups, or social gatherings — something subtle but powerful happens. We begin to find our identity, not just as individuals with unique stories and interests, but as women who care about knowledge, equity, and connection. Through our collective efforts, we remind each other who we are and what we stand for.

Our sense of belonging grows through participation. Every time someone brings forward a new idea, volunteers at an event, or simply listens with attention and warmth, we help to shape the spirit of CFUW Brantford. These small acts of engagement are how we discover ourselves — through the shared purpose of learning, advocacy, and friendship.

As September opens a new season, both in nature and in our Federation’s calendar, it’s an ideal time to reflect on what first drew us here. Was it the companionship of like-minded women? The joy of lifelong learning? The desire to contribute something meaningful to our community? Whatever the reason, our continued involvement keeps that spark alive.

Together, we form a network of women whose collective voice matters — locally, nationally, and globally.

And in that shared purpose, we don’t just do good work; we find something deeper: a sense of identity, belonging, and inspiration.

Lucie Costin-Hall  
President of the Month for September



### September General Meeting



At the September 25, 2025 General Meeting, CFUW Brantford was very lucky to have, as our speaker, Erin Byron, of the Welkin Wellness Yoga Studio in Brantford. Erin has written several books related to yoga therapy. She explored the building blocks of wellness and, through a variety of activities and science-backed data, gave us some tools to feel less stressed, be more present in our lives, and enjoy a greater sense of well-being. Lots of fun!

## ADVOCACY NEWS!

### NOVA VITA'S HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

At our September General Meeting, our club approved the Motion to support Nova Vita's 'Hope for the Holidays' fundraiser. We are collecting women's and girls' hygiene items and a variety of different sizes of pajamas and money donations. A few weeks ago you received a list of items that are needed. Please note that all items must be NEW, in original packaging and unwrapped.

#### MONEY DONATIONS:

-CHEQUES (made out to 'Nova Vita') and CASH. Please give them to Teddy in an envelope with your name and address. (DO NOT MAIL THEM)

-E-TRANSFERS must be made directly to Nova Vita

You will receive a receipt from Nova Vita for money donations only.

It is really exciting to hear the enthusiasm from members who have shared what they've already bought as their donation. Please bring your items and/or cash to the OCTOBER and NOVEMBER General Meetings.



### ALLOCATION OF OUR 2025-26 DUES TARGETED FOR INTERNATIONAL ENDEAVOURS

We have been receiving proposals from the membership. Please note that the deadline to submit your proposal is Monday, October 20.

Submissions will be summarized and published in the November newsletter and sent out to the membership by email prior to the November 22nd General Meeting.

A motion will be made at the November 22nd General Meeting, "that the not-for-profit international organizations nominated by the membership be approved to receive the portion of our 2025-26 membership dues allocated for international endeavours."

#### "SIGNIFICANT LIVES"

As most of you know, "Significant Lives" is a book written and published by our members for our 50th anniversary. It is an amazing write-up about women who have made a difference in our area. We ONLY have two books left for sale at \$50 each. Proceeds go to the Scholarship Fund (a tax receipt is provided). If you are interested, please let me know asap! This is definitely a KEEPER! I will bring them to our October 22nd meeting.

The Advocacy Committee thanks you for the enthusiasm you have shown in the initiatives we have started. It is you, who makes this job a pleasure! Teddy B.

#### Memoir Writing

After last year's CFUW meeting on the topic of memoir writing, I started thinking that it would be wonderful if the Brantford CFUW could offer members a group for those interested in writing their memoirs. An initial proposal for such a group was written up and circulated among the membership. It would be the intention of this group to provide a comfortable, safe, and supportive environment where members could, over time, find their voices and share their writings with other like-minded and adventurous writers. Eight people signed up for the experience. We met without much in the way of structure but, over the first several weeks, we decided that it would be great to meet twice a month to maintain momentum. We also agreed to meet at Lucie's country property, an inspirational and picturesque environment for budding writers.

Going forward, the group will likely become larger now that the summer has passed. New members are welcome to join. That's great. That said, however, if people do want to join, a casual "drop-in" kind of attendance is not encouraged. New members are encouraged to commit to attending the meetings on a regular basis as much as possible. So doing, this provides everyone the opportunity to get to know each other well enough to feel "safe" sharing their writing with others. Irregular attendance or frequent drop-ins of unfamiliar faces creates an instability in the group. So please, if you feel up to it, come join the group and attend as consistently as possible. You will find it great fun and a deeply moving experience!!

One final word. Please do not see us as a super exclusive group of formidable writers. We are women like yourself just trying to keep it real while having a lot of fun in the process. If you're interested, please join. If you are busy at the moment but see yourself having more time to commit to this kind of group in the future, then keep us in mind for when you have the time and energy to commit. Lucie C.

# Hope for the Holidays

## University Women's Club of Brantford

Thank you for providing hope for the holidays! Below you'll find a custom curated Holiday Wish List, detailing how you can make the most impact for Nova Vita this holiday season. Some helpful reminders:

- Gifts must be **new, in-packaging**, and **unexpired**.
- For health and safety purposes, gifts must be **unwrapped**.

### Nova Vita Holiday Wish List

- Gift Items:
  - o Bath & Body Gift Sets
  - o Wellness Gifts (ie. Jade Rollers, Eye Masks, etc)
  - o Make-Up Sets & Make-Up Bags
  - o Hair Styling Tools (Curling Irons, Straighteners, Blow Dryers, etc)
  - o Cleansing Face Masks & Facial Cleansers
  - o Bath Bombs & Bubble Bath
  - o Face Cream
  - o Hair Brushes
  - o Loofas
  - o Hand Soap
  - o Tampons
  - o Body Wash
  - o Shampoo & Conditioner
  - o Deodorant
  - o Perfumes & Body Sprays
- PJ's & Loungewear:
  - o Women's PJ's (Size XS – 3X)
  - o Kids PJ's (Size 2T – 6T)
  - o Youth PJ's (Size 5 – 12)
  - o Slippers (Kids & Adult Sizes)
  - o Robes (Kids & Adult Sizes)

Thank you for making a difference this holiday season. For assistance or questions, please contact:

### Jessica Hill

Hope For The Holidays Coordinator  
519-752-1005 x216 | [jhill@novavita.org](mailto:jhill@novavita.org)



# Interest Groups

## **Monday Evening Book Group:** Did he or didn't he?

Shakespeare that is. Do you think he, as one man, wrote everything that has been attributed to him? If you read By Any Other Name by Jodi Picoult, you may begin to have some doubts. The historical novel is a dual-timeline one that interweaves the stories of two women separated by about 400 years. Emilia Bassano is a real historical figure, poet, and speculative candidate for having written works traditionally attributed to William Shakespeare. Melina Green is a contemporary playwright in New York City, descended from Emilia and grappling with many of the same issues Emilia faced: gender discrimination, invisibility, and questions of authorship and recognition. The novel examines what it means to create, to claim ownership of one's art, and the price that must sometimes be paid to have one's voice heard. Emilia's life reflects an historical erasure of female voices; Melina's reflects a modern struggle with gatekeeping and gender bias in the arts. And all these struggles within the framework of the fascinating personal lives of the two women.

The group had lively discussions about the Shakespeare question, the roles of women in the Elizabethan era vs the modern era, and the morality of many of the characters in the novel, in particular, the men. We agreed that Picoult puts forth many good arguments for the possibility that Shakespeare's works, while attributed to him, may have been a collaboration, with at least some of those collaborators being women who needed a man's name on their work. The group also discussed how they felt about Jodi Picoult being accused of writing "chic lit" by detractors. We all disagreed strongly with that description of her writing. Kay R.



**Dining Out Group:** Our Dining Out Group first ventured to Pinecroft two years ago and we were keen to return this year. The trip to Aylmer was delightful, especially on the backroads through farm country and stunning autumn colours. Pinecroft itself is a log cabin, nestled in the woods, built in 1948 to house a community of potters. The restaurant serves up hearty, healthy, country fare that is locally sourced and nicely prepared. Our group gathered in the store to check out creations from local artists and crafts people. We think Pinecroft is well worth the drive. Lin F.



## **Bicycling**

**Group:** The bikers have been enjoying fine fall weather.



**Walking Group:** Some of the walking group went to Paris Road Tim Hortons after walking on the trail. They had four different retro cups, not too exciting but fun. Norah O.



**Games Group:** Fun and laughs were had playing a game called Rummikub. Gloria Smith was champion. Norah O.



**Creative Cooking:** A group of eight women who enjoy trying new recipes met at the home of Sandra H. on a lovely, sunny afternoon for a late lunch of appetizers/finger foods that they had created. Excellent food and conversation topped the balmy afternoon off on the patio.



**Thursday Evening Book Group: The Air Raid Book Club by Annie Lyons** is a historical fiction novel set in London during World War II. The story starts in 1938, with bookseller Gertie facing difficult times, having recently lost her beloved husband and the lingering sadness at never having been able to have children. Struggling to face running the bookshop she and her husband opened together, Gertie is preparing to sell the shop and move away when she is asked if she would be willing to take in a young Jewish refugee from Germany. Gertie is unsure and when the sullen fifteen-year-old Hedy Fischer arrives, Gertie fears she has nothing left to give the troubled girl. Faced with the challenges of war and personal loss, Gertie and Hedy find solace and strength in each other, ultimately forming a book club to support and unite their community during the dark times of the Blitz. The Air Raid Book Club is about love, friendship, hope, and most of all – the power of books to bring young and old together and unite a community in need in its darkest hour. Members felt this book was a pleasant, easy read about friendship and character development. Roma M.

## 2025–2026 EXECUTIVE

### PRESIDENT IN NAME:

- Barbara Melara

### PAST PRESIDENT:

- Janet Kempster

### ROTATING PRESIDENTIAL TEAM:

- Diane Bradley/Pat McGinnis—June to August
- Lucie Costin-Hall— September
- Betsy Capitano—October
- Wendy Bethune—November
- Maria Timmons— December, January
- Catherine Sawyer- February
- Linda Tripp—March
- Dian Kuzyk—April
- Barbara Melara—May

### SECRETARY:

Arlene Cass

TREASURER: Maria Timmons

### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

- Communications:** Sandra Hughes
- Interest Groups:** Roma Makkreel
- Membership:** Marsha Skrypuch
- Program:** Colette Wilson
- Scholarship:** Karen Innes
- Social:** Lynne Duncombe
- Advocacy:** Teddy Buzek

## Scholarship

The applications deadline for the Award B scholarships is Oct 31, 2025.

Eligible applicants are female living in Brantford or Brant County and have been out of school for at least two years. Please encourage eligible candidates, who you may know, to apply for the \$1000. Application forms are available by Email.

Karen I.



Thank you to the members who make sure the Newsletter is correctly spelled and grammatical,  
Anne M. Naomi K.

**Thank  
YOU!**

## October General Meeting



**Time:** 6:30pm, October 22, 2025

**Location:** McCleister Funeral Home or in your home, at your computer on a Zoom call.

**Program:** Paulette Breau

Paulette Breau is a retired officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) whose thirty-year law enforcement career (1987-2017) culminated in the rank of sergeant. Her service was marked not only by her commitment to public safety, but by her determination to succeed in a profession historically dominated by men.

### Women in Canada's National Police Force

This presentation explores the history and impact of women in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police from its early days to the present. It begins with matrons and jailers in the Klondike era, moves through pioneers like forensic pathologist Dr. Frances McGill and the groundbreaking female troop of 1974. Milestones include the appointment of women commissioners, service with the United Nations and the changes brought about by the Merlo-Davidson lawsuit. Linda T.

## GOOD NEWS LADIES

At the present time, a firm decision has been made to serve refreshments at 6:30 pm before the start of the general meeting on **October 22**. Please come and enjoy a cup of tea and cookies.

Also, Barbara Melara has graciously offered to host **THE HOLIDAY GET TOGETHER** on **DECEMBER 10th**. Barbara's address is 61 Victoria Blvd. St. George and she will be welcoming members to

her home starting at 5 pm. This most enjoyable evening is an organized pot luck with appetizers and desserts.

This year if your last name starts with a letter between A and K please bring a dessert and if your last name starts with a letter between L and W please bring an appetizer along with your beverage of choice. De-caffe tea and sparkling water will be available.

We are asking you to donate a toonie to cover the cost of renting plates and wine glasses.

The Holiday Get Together is an opportunity to socialize with members whom you may not often see and a wonderful way to "catch" the holiday spirit. Lynne D.



Bev Osborn's husband, Brian, has passed away.

WITH DEEPEST  
*Sympathy*

<https://www.mccleisterfuneralhome.ca/obituaries/Brian-Douglas-Osborn?obId=45831287>

